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**STATEMENT ON THE NATION'S REPORT CARD**  
*Mega-States: An Analysis of Student Performance in the Five  
Most Heavily Populated States in the Nation*

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**Commissioner, Texas Education Agency**

The National Assessment Governing Board's *Mega-States* report provides an insightful snapshot of some major successes in our state. The data from more than a decade confirm that the hard work of our students and educators in Texas—as well as those state lawmakers who have dared to build a public education system that aims high—is paying tremendous dividends for the future of Texas.

The gains our eighth-grade students have made in mathematics—32 points higher in 2011 than in 1990—speak to an emphasis Texas has placed on a critical core subject. Along with mathematics, our eighth-grade performance in science in 2011 reveals Texas is on a path to meet the growing job needs in critical STEM fields across our nation.

Finally, Texas is proud to see significant gains since 1990 across demographic groups: African-American eighth graders scored 42 points higher in 2011 than in 1990; white and Hispanic students posted greater gains in average scores from 1990 to 2011 compared with their peers nationally; plus, significant gains were made by students with disabilities and students from lower-income families.

Although the *Mega-States* report provides a wonderful snapshot, I do not believe any of the states represented think the gains have been enough, or that the work is anywhere near complete. Our strength lies in a commitment to educating every child in every school in every community across our state. I can assure you that Texas will continue working to aim higher and accomplish more for its students, educators, and for the future of our state.